

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11 COME-00 AGR-20 OMB-01

TRSE-00 DRC-01 /169 W

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R 101800Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5208

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BELFAST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PBOR, EI

SUBJ: GOOD DUBLIN REACTION TO TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE RESULTS

SUMMARY: ALL MAJOR NEWSPAPERS AND MOST POLITICIANS ARE CAUTIOUSLY HAPPY ABOUT RESULTS OF DECEMBER 6-9 TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE IN ENGLAND, AND ESPECIALLY ABOUT CREATION OF COUNCIL OF IRELAND. FIANNA FAIL HAS SOME PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, AND EXTREMISTS SEE "SELL-OUT." GOI GOT MOST OF WHAT IT WANTED FROM CONFERENCE, BUT NOT AT EXPENSE OF UNIONISTS. AGREED POLITICAL PACKAGE IS SOUND*AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO SURVIVE CONSIDERABLE VIOLENCE. IT MAY HAVE TO. END SUMMARY.

1. DECISION TO FORM COUNCIL OF IRELAND IS NATURALLY MAIN N WS ITEM HERE. PRESS IS NOT BILLING COUNCIL AS GUARANTEED STEPPING-STONE TO UNITED IRELAND, BUT RATHER AS MEANS TO RECONCILE OPPOSED COMMUNITIES BY GIVING THEM STRUCTURE IN WHICH THEY CAN AGREE TO DISAGREE. IRISH TIMES EDITORIAL SAYS: "THE REPUBLIC, IN SHORT, GETS AN ALL-IRELAND INSTITUTION WHICH, IT HOPES, WILL DRAW THE TWO PARTS OF THE COUNTRY TOGETHER: THE UNIONIST HAS HIS SIX-COUNTY STATE GUARANTEED AS LONG AS A VOTING MAJOIRITY THERE SUPPORTS IT."

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2. OPPOSITION LEADER LYNCH WELCOMED CONFERENCE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE BUT SAID HE WANTED TO SEE WHETHER COUNCIL WOULD IN FACT BE ALLOCATED ADEQUATE POWERS, PARTICULARLY IN FIELDS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, POLICING AND HUMAN RIGHTS. HE DID NOT THINK IT WOULD BE "PRACTICABLE" TO TRY IN SOUTHERN COURTS PERSONS CHARGED WITH CRIMES IN NORTH. THIS IS A RESERVATION ON AN IMPORTANT POINT. LYNCH DID NOT, FORTUNATELY, CRITICIZE COSGRAVE'S SENTENCE ACCEPTING THE CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. THERE ARE SOME RUMBLES IN HIS PARTY, HOWEVER. LAST WEEK, HIS SHADOW FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTERS TOLD US COSGRAVE'S "RECOGNITION" OF NI MIGHT GIVE FIANNA FAIL MAJOR PROBLEMS.

3. REPUBLICAN EXTREMIST ORGANIZATIONS HERE PREDICTABLY CRITICIZE AGREEMENT IN ALMOST SAME TERMS AS NORTHERN LOYALISTS, CALLING IT A "SELL-OUT." OF MORE CONCERN, HOWEVER, IS OPPOSITION TO NI "RECOGNITION" BY NEWLY-FOUNDED "IRISH SOVEREIGNTY MOVEMENT," WHICH INCLUDES SOME IMPORTANT FIANNA FAIL DEPUTIES, PLUS UNIMPORTANT ONES ON GOVERNMENT SIDE. OBJECTIONS FROM THIS ESTABLISHMENT LEAD US TO THINK THAT PUBLIC OPINION HERE HAS BEEN PUSHED ALONG ABOUT AS FAST AS IT WOULD TOLERATE.

4. APPEARS TO US THAT GOI GOT MOST OF WHAT IT WANTED OUT OF CONFERENCE. AT SAME TIME, PM COSGRAVE WAS ACCURATE IN SAYING THAT THERE WERE "NO WINNERS AND NO LOSERS." NEGOTIATIONS MUST HAVE FOCUSED NOT ON POINT-SCORING BUT ON REAL PROBLEMS OF EACH SIDE. IN ANYTHING BUT CONSTRUCTURE ATMOSPHERE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE MAKE SO MUCH PROGRESS. AND CONFERENCE DID RECORD MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS. FOR DUBLIN, MAIN GAIN IS ABILITY TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NOW A STRUCTURE FOR ACHIEVING UNITED IRELAND-- THOUGH WHETHER NORTH WILL ACTUALLY MOVE THIS WAY WILL NOT BE CLEAR FOR MANY YEARS. EVEN IF COUNCIL TURNS OUT TO BE ONLY A SOP TO REPUBLICAN OPINION, IT WILL HAVE SERVED A PACIFYING ROLE. COSGRAVE'S RECOGNITION OF NI CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS -- WHICH HAD BEEN EXPECTED-- WAS BALANCED BY UNEXPECTED STATEMENT THAT BRITAIN WOULD "SUPPORT" ANY EVENTUAL WISH OF NI MAJORITY TO BECOME PART OF UNITED IRELAND. THIS GOES BEYOND ANY PAST BRITISH STATEMENTS.

5. AS DUBLIN WANTED, COUNCIL IS TO HAVE SOME EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY AND NO BRITISH PARTICIPATION. FUNCTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN FINALLY DETERMINED, BUT THOSE MENTIONED AS EXAMPLES ARE IN PRACTICAL FIELDS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUCH AS STUDY ON IMPACT OF EC MEMBERSHIP, EXPLOITATION AND CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE, TRADE, INDUSTRY, TOURISM, AND SO ON. COUNCIL'S PROGRAM REMAINS OPEN-ENDED, ANOTHER DUBLIN INTEREST. IN PRACTICE, SEEMS CLEAR THAT COUNCIL WILL HAVE AS MANY POWERS AS NI REPRESENTATIVES ARE WILLING TO ALLOW, SINCE DUBLIN WILL PRESS FOR AMBITIOUS PROGRAM. IF POLITICAL OBJECTIONS OF PROTESTANT COMMUNITY CAN BE REMOVED, COUNCIL COULD ACHIEVE REAL IMPORTANT, SINCE ALMOST EVERY ACTIVITY ON THE ISLAND LENDS ITSLE

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TO NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION.

6. JUDGING FROM FORMAL CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND BRIEFINGS, MAIN DIFFICULTY FOR DUBLIN MUST HAVE BEEN IN AREA OF EXTRADITION OR PUNISHMENT OF NI OFFENDERS WHO FLEE TO THE REPUBLIC. THIS IS LEAST CLEAR OF ALL CONFERENCE DECISIONS, AND SUBSTANTIAL WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE BY JOINT LONDON/DUBLIN COMMISSION. IN MEANTIME, DUBLIN HAS UNDERTAKEN TO PROSECUTE IN SOUTHERN COURTS PERSONS ACCUSED OF VIOLENCE IN NORTH. DUBLIN WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE AN ALL-IRELAND COURT, BUT THIS HAS BEEN OBJECTIONABLE TO UNIONISTS, WHO WANT EXTRADITION. THIS APPEARS TO BE MOST SENSITIVE PROBLEM FACING SECOND STAGE OF CONFERENCE IN JANUARY.

7. TO EMBASSY, AGREED PACKAGE LOOKS FAIR AND ADEQUATE. IT REPRESENTS ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE FOR THOSE WHO WANT POLITICAL PROGRESS RATHER THAN EXCUSE TO CONTINUE FIGHTING. AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO PRODUCE IMMEDIATE PEACE, HOWEVER. FOR A WHILE, IT MAY PRODUCE EVEN MORE VIOLENCE, SINCE WILD MEN ON BOTH SIDES HAVE EVERYTHING TO LOSE IF COMPROMISE POLITICAL SOLUTION SUCCEEDS. NEVERTHELESS AGREEMENT ON FULL POLITICAL PACKAGE IS MOST SIGNIFICANT LANDMARK IN ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS FOR FIFTY YEARS. MODERATE IRISHMEN OF BOTH "PERSUASIONS," WITH ENTHUSIASTIC ENCOURAGEMENT FROM BRITIAN, HAVE AGREED ON PEACEFUL, COMPREHENSIVE AND SYMMETRICAL ARRANGEMENT FOR FUTURE. GIVEN IMPRESSIVE BACKING FOR THIS PACKAGE AND FACT THAT NO ONE SEES ANY OTHER VALID OPTION, WE WOULD EXPECT THIS ARRANGEMENT TO OUTLAST VIOLENCE. IT SHOULD EVENTUALLY DIMINISH COMMUNITY SUPPORT OF VIOLENT MEN. BUT NOT RIGHT AWAY. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE FROM BOTH SIDES, AND ESPECIALLY FROM LOYALISTS. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE NI ASSEMBLY AND REMAINDER OF PACKAGE FRUSTRATED BY LOYALIST OPPOSITION. EVEN SO, BASIC AGREEMENT SHOULD REMAIN VALID AND PROVIDE CHANCE OF PEACE OVER LONG TERM. MOORE
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONALISM, HUMAN RIGHTS, LAW, FOREIGN RELATIONS, EXTREMISTS, NATIONALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973DUBLIN01626
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731235/aaaaazmk.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25-Jul-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <01-Oct-2001 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOOD DUBLIN REACTION TO TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE RESULTS SUMMARY: ALL MAJOR NEWSPAPERS AND MOST POLITICIANS ARE CAUTIOUSLY
TAGS: PINT, PBOR, EI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005